

THE MORNING NEWS

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Carnival 60 and its royal court now officially rule Aruba!



All Prins and Panchos with PM Eman and Tecla Kelly



PM hands over the key to Prins 60 and Pancho Rebienta

On Wednesday evening at sunset, Aruba's Prime Minister, Mike Eman, ended his day with a very pleasant task: playing his role in the continuing weeks of revelry that

comprise Aruba's Diamond Jubilee Carnival. A beloved ritual takes place, usually just before the final weeks of parades, elections and parties wherein the PM turns over

administration of the island to the Prins and Pancho (Princes and Jesters) in all three age categories, with symbolic "the keys to the island." From this point forward, they and their court now rule.

Prime Minister Eman greeted officials of the Stichting Arubaanse Carnival, or SAC, the volunteer organization which administers carnival events, in front of the Government House in Oranjestad. They accompanied this year's Prins and Panchos, which are elected in three categories, Infantil (Children) Hubenil (Youth) and Adult. Since this is Aruba's 60th carnival, and a lustrum year, there is also a pair of "Prins of Prins," - Princes of Princes - chosen from contenders who have won the adult contest previously.

Jordano Hilario, "Prins 60" and Emon Webb, "Pancho Rebienta" had the honor of reading the Proclamation of Carnival Law: 15 points of order which will rule the land through Ash Wednesday, March 5th, when carnival officially ends at the stroke of midnight.

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Olympics: Ban in gay rights plea, US warns of toothpaste bombs

SOCHI (AFP) - UN chief Ban Ki-moon Thursday called for an end to attacks and discrimination against gays on the eve of the official opening of the Sochi Olympics, as the United States warned of toothpaste bombs on flights to Russia.

The build-up to the 22nd Winter Games has been overshadowed by fears over security and human rights -- with a law passed last year banning the dissemination of "gay propaganda" to minors criticised by activists as vehemently homophobic.

Speaking as sporting action got under way on Thursday, Ban told a session of the International Olympic Committee in Sochi that everyone should join together fight dis-

crimination.

"We must all raise our voices against attacks on lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender or intersex people. We must oppose the arrest, imprisonment and discriminatory restrictions they face," he said.

"I know principle six of the Olympic Charter enshrines the IOC's opposition to any form of discrimination.

"Hatred of any kind must have no place in the 21st century," said Ban, who did not specifically address the situation in Russia.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak later denied there was discrimination in Russia but said there should be no gay rights protests at the Olympics.

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Carnival 60 and its royal court now officially rule Aruba!

Continued from pg 1



PM Eman with the current Carnival Royalty



TMN journalist / photographer Rosalie joins the bachanal



Diamond Jubilee Children Queen with Prins and Pancho



The PM is crowned

The new "laws" listed requirements for each of the island's ministers and their administrations to obey while Carnival rules Aruba. As the Prins and Panchos are selected for the hilarity of their comedy routines during the competition, the laws are also an exercise in broad humor.

This year, in honor of this landmark carnival, SAC President Tecla Kelly-Hernandez and volunteers had a surprise for Prime Minister

Eman, providing him with a glittering cape and a feathered, three corner hat for his good humor and cooperation."

Also accepting their symbols of rule for Carnival 60 were the Youth "Prins Kiko," Dion Carolina and "Pancho A Bai Robes" Steven de Cuba and the Children's Prins and Pancho Xenon Daal and Bryanden Koolman, aka "Prins Mega and Pancho Falta."

The current royal court of



Children and Youth Road-march King and Queen

Carnival 60, the Queen of Tumba, King and Queen of Children's & Youth Road-march and recently elected Children's Queen, Sheqayli Ascencion, and the Grand Queen and Youth Queen from Carnival 59, Samantha Robert and Edselyne Figaroa.

By Rosalie Klein



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Aruba on the right track for European Pre-Clearance



PM Mike Eman

ORANJESTAD -- Last Tuesday morning the government met with all the parties involved in the European pre-clearance project for Aruba. Aruba is well on its way for becoming the first country in the world to have a pre-clearance arrangement for Europe. The government has reported that this project is moving ahead successfully. The hope is that by the end of this year this project can be a reality for the International Queen Beatrix Airport of Aruba.

Meeting with the government on this important project were: Marten Dijkstra and Guus Vlaming of the Schiphol Group, also Manuel van 't Lijf from KLM, Kierco

Gerritsen from the Ministry of Justice of The Netherlands and representatives of the Aruba Airport Authority and the government of Aruba.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Prime Minister expressed his gratitude for the work already done by the group. He also reported on the plans for the expansion of the American pre-clearance for private jets.

Representative of the government at the European Union, Drs. Cedrick Tilma indicated that "...it is much easier to implement this initiative here on Aruba because of the excellent cooperation we have with The Hague. We succeeded in putting every-

one on the same wave length to achieve something this big."

Drs. Tilma explained that at international conferences this is being followed very closely, they are very interested in what is happening on Aruba. Other governments have tried getting a European pre-clearance, but did not succeed because it is not an easy matter. The matter is not simply a pre-clearance where inspection and processing of immigration and customs are concerned, but also the introduction of the so-called "Happy Flow."

In the pre-clearance process a passenger en route to Europe must simply put their passport to scan and a computerized system will do the rest. This will offer the passenger not only a much more pleasant experience, but also much safer. Aruba's airport will be the only one in the world where one can enter the US and Europe. Here is where one can observe the power and importance that Aruba has in this project," said Tilma.

Last year during the Europe Meets the Americas Conference, participants had the opportunity to see a demonstration of the Happy Flow. The 'Roadmap to Pre-Clearance Aruba' as the project is known in the European Union, is part of the vision of the government of Aruba and to position our island as a hub between Latin America and Europe. This will open doors to endless economic opportunities, including investments, knowledge and of course, tourism.

New Penal Code increases punishment for different crimes

ORANJESTAD -- In recent days the Aruba Parliament met to discuss the revised Penal Code. Back in 2012 the new Law Code was passed approving a series of changes. There were many outdated and some even strange laws in the old Penal Code. According to Parliament member Desiree Croes, there were laws that were relevant to the past century, which are no longer appropriate today. Hence, one of the reasons to change the Penal Code of Aruba.

Croes explained that there was the need for the so called "invoeringorder" (implementation order) in order to implement the new Penal Code. The New Penal Code today includes laws related to traffic fines where offender will not only be fined, but may also be incarcerated.

In the new Penal Code the fine for all criminal acts will be much higher than in the past. There are now 6 categories of fines beginning with an amount of Afl. 5 and can reach as high as 1 million Florins. However, these changes have an effect on other types of laws also. With respect to the law regarding dogs, passed last year, it now has its sanction. However, in view of the change in the Penal Code, this offense can also be cited with a fine.

In the past, if one was guilty of a serious crime, the maximum punishment would be 20 years incarceration or life in prison. Sometimes due to this a judge would be stuck if the punishment called for more than 20 years, but less than lifetime. In the new penal Code the punishment can now be 30 years for serious crimes, giving the Judge the option to levy 10, 20, 15, 20, 25 and up to 30 years imprisonment if it is not relevant for the convicted to get life time.

According to Parliamentarian Croes, the situation of 20 years imprisonment has the possibility that the person can be paroled before the 20 years for good behaviour. According to Croes, every year that a person is in prison is not counted as 12 months. When someone is imprisoned in KIA (Aruba's Prison facility) it counts as 9 months, meaning that the person does one-third of his sentence. Someone doing a 20 year sentence will actually do only 13 years. There are cases where the decision is made that the person will be required to sit out the entire 20 years sentence. In such a case he will be levied a 30 year sentence. All of this is now possible with the new Penal code, which has been approved by Parliament.

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Aruba's 60th Carnival

Come and support your favorite candidate!
7 candidates to compete for Aruba's 60th Carnival's Youth Queen tonight!



ORANJESTAD -- Tonight at 7:30 p.m. in Aruba Entertainment Center the grand Youth Queen Election will take place.

In celebration of Aruba's 60th Carnival jubilee this event promises to be one of the biggest and most beautiful ones as yet with its inspirational speeches and luxurious shows.

The line-up for tonight is the following:

1. Lynn Xena Angela - **Champagne Carnival Group**; 2. Shandy Robles de Medina - **OPC Carnival Group**; 3. Shakira Quandt - **district of Santa Cruz**; 4. Shandra Ashby - **Royal Carnival Group**; 5. Dana


Arendsz - **T.O.B.**; 6. Gabriela Croes - **district of Oranjestad**; 7. Sammy van Eenennaam - **Reina Escolar (School Queen)**.

Tickets are available at SAC's office in Dakota as well as at the gate of Entertainment Center tonight. VIP section tickets will be Afl. 25,- per person and Afl. 10,- for the general public.

Aruba's Carnival started in the year 1954, so this year we are celebrating our 60th Grand Carnival. The Aruban community comes together every year to show off their creativity, ambiance and folklore. In 1955 various clubs and districts from all over the

island came together to celebrate the carnival and this was the year that the first carnival Queen was elected. The traditional Grand parade started in 1957. Aruba's Carnival Foundation (SAC) was created on November 11th, 1966 at 11:11 am. (11-11-66). As of that time the foundation consisting of volunteers has been working enthusiastically and very hard to organize all the different events related to the Carnival season.

For more information regarding Aruba's Carnival visit SAC's facebook page: [facebook.com/stichting-arubaansecarnaval](https://www.facebook.com/stichting-arubaansecarnaval).



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Jeuline Abspoel crowned Mrs. Carnival Savaneta!

Savaneta district makes a comeback to celebrate Aruba's 60th Carnival



Min. Schwengle poses with Mrs. Savaneta 2014

SAVANETA -- Some years back Savaneta district was well known for their participation in Aruba's Carnival. They had their own Carnival group, carnival queens and even their own parade. After some years of being inactive during the Carnival season a group of Savaneta decided to make a comeback this year and join the grand celebration of Aruba's 60th Carnival ju-

bilee.

Martica Arends of the organizing committee of the Savaneta Carnival group was happy to receive Minister of Public Health Dr. Alex Schwengle at their introduction to the public. Min. Schwengle who comes from the Savaneta district was also happy to be present and show his support.

During the event the group also introduced their representative for Mrs. Carnival 2014: Jeuline Abspoel.

Jeuline is not a stranger regarding beauty contests as she has participated in a few in the past. The Savaneta district is convinced that she will do a great job during the Mrs. Carnival 2014 election.

The Minister invited all inhabitants of his district to come out and show their support for the group and their Mrs. Carnival and to join the group of Savaneta during the parades. He also added his main message for Carnival: "Parents take good care of your children, see to it that they are well fed, protected against the sun and to avoid drinking while driving!"



Looking over the different costume designs for the parades

Aruba Is honored to honor you

Mrs. Patricia Smith honored by ATA at the Costa Linda Beach Resort



Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very special Lady who is a loyal and friendly Visitor of Aruba, at the Costa Linda, as Ambassador of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20 or more consecutive years.

The honoree was Mrs. Patricia Smith from NO. Royalton Ohio. Mrs. Smith has been visiting Aruba for over 30 consecutive years, first time she and her late husband Mr. Richard Smith and daughters Sue and Sandy came to Aruba was in 1977, since then the Smith fam-

ily has continuously visit Aruba for years after years.

Mr. Ernest Giel from The Aruba Tourism Authority, who conducted the honoring ceremony, knows the Smith family himself since 1977, when he used to work at the King International Casino at the Holiday Inn.

Now the family Smith is much bigger with Sue and Sandy's husbands and children and Mrs. Smith is also bringing to Aruba now her great granddaughter, and they are all enjoying their nice vacation at their home away from home the Costa Linda Beach Resort.

Mr. Ernest Giel presented Mrs. Patricia Smith the Ambassador of Goodwill certificate together with a very nice painting from a local artist Mr. Elvis Tromp, also present during the ceremony were family members of Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Gloria Janga and Mrs. Miriam Rodriguez representing the Costa Linda Beach Resort.

Life is a gift.

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in every moment you are in.

— Unknown —

February 14 Romantic and Memorable
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 filled with a salad of shrimps and crab
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Escargot a la Bourguignon
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Choice of:
Chicken Spaha Copita
 with loaded potato, vegetable and lobster sauce
 or
Roast Tenderloin for two
 served with loaded potato, sautéed broccoli and bordelaise sauce
 or
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 topped with scallops served with rice, vegetable and delight with softness sauce
 or
Seafood trio combination
 served with rice and vegetable

Dessert:
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Aruba's Weather Update



WEATHER:
MOSTLY SUNNY AND
GENERALLY DRY.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE 30 CENTIGRADE /
MINIMUM TEMPERATURE 25 CENTIGRADE.

SUNRISE 07:05 AM/ **SUNSET** 06:44 PM.

WIND:
FRESH TO STRONG WINDS DIRECTION EAST AVERAGE 16 KTS GUSTING UP TO 26 KTS.

GENERAL SITUATION:
A SURFACE HIGH PRESSURE AREA OVER THE ATLANTIC OCEAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FRESH TO STRONG WINDS THESE COMING DAYS.

MOIST AIR COMING FROM THE EAST MAY OCCASIONALLY CAUSE A SHORT SHOWER MAINLY AFTER MIDNIGHT AND IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS. THE AMOUNT OF RAINFALL IS OF NO SIGNIFICANCE.

MARINE CONDITIONS:
WAVE DIRECTION WILL BE NORTHEAST WITH WAVE-HEIGHTS BETWEEN 4 TO 6 FEET.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE WEEK AND WEEKEND:

WEATHER REMAINS MOSTLY SUNNY.
NO SIGNIFICANT RAINFALL IS EXPECTED ONLY A SHORT PASSING SHOWER POSSIBLE MAINLY AFTER MIDNIGHT AND IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS.
TRADEWINDS WILL STAY FRESH TO STRONG.
TEMPERATURE WILL FLUCUATE AROUND NORMAL.

OBSERVED TEMPERATURE (CENTIGRADE) AND RAINFALL (MM) IN THE LAST 24 HOURS:
AIRPORT MAX 31 / MIN 25 / 0.00

HADICURARI MAX 28 / MIN 25 / 0.00



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Olympics: Ban in gay rights plea...

Cont. from pg 1

"Political propaganda during sporting events is forbidden by the Olympic charter and Russian law," he said.

More than 200 leading international authors including Salman Rushdie, Margaret Atwood and Jonathan Franzen criticised the anti-gay law as well as blasphemy legislation as a "chokehold" on creativity, in an open letter published in Britain's Guardian newspaper.

And Russian punk protest group Pussy Riot defied President Vladimir Putin by calling for a "Russia that is free" at a star-studded New York concert where they were feted by Madonna and cheered by thousands.

Toothpaste bomb warning

As well as rights concerns, the Games have been stalked by fears of terror attacks.

The United States on Wednesday warned American and foreign airlines that militants could try to hide explosives in toothpaste tubes on Russia-bound flights.

An official told AFP it has information "specifically targeting flights to Russia".

In a statement, the Department of Homeland Security said that "out of an abundance of caution" it regularly shares relevant information with partners both at home and abroad.

Two US warships have arrived in the Black Sea and will stand ready to offer assistance in the case of a security emergency at the Sochi Olympics.

Military officers said the vessels would be capable of providing a range of assistance, including potential evacuations of Americans or other foreign nationals, in the event of a possible terror attack.

Suicide bombings in the southern Russian city of Volgograd in late December killed 34 people and raised fresh concerns about the ability of the Russian authorities to ensure security during the Games.

Russian security forces are still fighting Islamist insurgents in the Northern Caucasus region, which is close to Sochi, and militants have threatened to strike targets in Russia during the Olympics.

About 40,000 members of the Russian security forces are on duty in and around Sochi in one of the tightest operations ever mounted at an Olympics.

After 22 years, 'Tonight Show' host Jay Leno signs off



This Jan. 13, 2013 file photo shows Jay Leno, left, and Jimmy Fallon

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Talk show host Jay Leno bids farewell to his remarkable 22-year run at the top of the late-night US television heap on Thursday when he signs off from NBC's "The Tonight Show" for the last time.

Country music titan Garth Brooks and comedian Billy Crystal -- Leno's first guest

back in May 1992 -- have been lined up as special guests on what the network is billing "Jay's historic farewell episode."

The silver-haired, square-jawed comedian and classic-car enthusiast is a national institution, famous for skewering hapless politicians in his opening monologue and welcoming celebrity guests for breezy interviews.

But this week has been all about sentimentality, with the indefatigable Betty White, 92, appearing Monday, country star Lyle Lovett playing a sad ballad Tuesday, and actress Sandra Bullock shedding tears Wednesday.

In a generational changing of the guard, baby-boomer Leno, 63, is giving way to Jimmy Fallon, 39, a Generation X'er who previously

hosted the "Late Night" show that follows "The Tonight Show."

What's more, from February 17, the show will be telecast from New York, where it was located before it moved to Los Angeles in 1972 when the legendary Johnny Carson helmed the program.

It's not the first time Leno has left the show, after he was infamously fired by NBC in 2009 and forced into another program in an earlier time slot -- only to triumphantly return the next year after an outcry from NBC affiliates.

This time around, Leno has said, he was asked to make way for new blood.

"I'm not unhappy. This is a great franchise (and) I'm really proud we've been able to keep it number one," Leno told the Los Angeles Times newspaper in an interview posted online this week.

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Cameron urges UK to unite to stop Scottish independence

LONDON (AFP) - British Prime Minister David Cameron will urge people in all parts of the United Kingdom on Friday to try to persuade Scots to vote 'no' in their referendum on independence.

With just seven months to go until the September 18 vote, Cameron will reach out to people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which he said would be "deeply diminished without Scotland". The Conservative leader also acknowledged there could be "no complacency about the result of this referendum -- the outcome is still up in the air".

A recent ICM opinion poll showed support for independence is growing, with 37 percent now in favour -- up five points since September -- against 44 percent against.

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No immigration reform until Obama rebuilds trust : Boehner

WASHINGTON (AFP) - House Speaker John Boehner threw cold water on the prospects of near-term immigration reform, saying Thursday that Barack Obama must rebuild "trust" in his presidency before there is progress on the issue.

"I have never underestimated the difficulty in moving forward this year," the top Republican in Congress told reporters one week after unveiling a set of immigration reform principles aimed at legalizing the millions of people living in the shadows in the United States.

Boehner said he and many Republicans bristled at Obama's announcement in last month's State of the Union address that he will skirt Congress and wield his executive authority to move on some issues like economic disparity.

Obama's pledge to increase

his use of executive powers was only "feeding more distrust" of the administration, and immigration reform will stall until that rift is healed, Boehner said.

"There is widespread doubt about whether this administration can be trusted to enforce our laws, and it's going to be difficult to move any immigration legislation until that changes."

Boehner added that Americans and lawmakers alike "don't trust that the reform we're talking about will be implemented as it was intended to be."

The speaker said he has been pushing for reform for the past 15 months, and that the issue "needs to be dealt with."

But he stressed that Obama, who strongly backed last year's Senate bill that laid out a 14-year pathway to citizenship for many of the more than 11 million people now in the country

illegally, needed to engage more with Republicans on some of their priorities, including jobs and training bills that have stalled in the Democratic-run Senate.

Last year the Senate passed a landmark bipartisan bill that laid out the most comprehensive immigration reform in a generation, including an overhaul of the guest worker program, tighter entry-exit monitoring, and improved border security.

But Boehner and his House Republicans rejected it, saying they would tackle the issue in smaller, more manageable pieces, with border security the first legislative step.

Despite Boehner's remarks, White House spokesman Jay Carney said "we remain optimistic about the prospects for comprehensive immigration reform in 2014."

Dutch Home affairs minister under fire over security service phone taps

THE HAGUE - Home affairs minister Ronald Plasterk and defence minister Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert were summoned by the prime minister on Wednesday night to explain the confusion over exactly who gathered information on 1.8 million phone calls and text messages.

The ministers told parliament yesterday the Dutch, not the American, secret services were responsible for monitoring the phone calls, and that the information had then been shared with the US authorities.

Parliament is due to debate the latest information next week. Opposition MPs want to know if Plasterk deliberately

misinformed parliament last year when he stated NSA was behind the information gathering.

Plasterk told MPs in October the Americans were behind the tapping, after the revelations were first published in German magazine Spiegel.

However, in a two paragraph briefing on Wednesday, Plasterk said the information had been gathered by the Netherlands itself.

"The details were collected in the interest of counter-terrorism activities and military operations abroad," the briefing stated. The information was then "correctly shared with the US".

US sets sanctions on Iran, terror global network

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States blacklisted Thursday individuals and companies worldwide for violating its sanctions regime on Iran, even as it has slightly eased those sanctions as nuclear talks progress.

The Treasury Department said the sanctions also were aimed at supporters of terrorism.

The sanctions targets are operating in Turkey, Spain, Germany, Georgia, Afghanistan, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Liechtenstein, the Treasury said.

"The global targets designated today play key roles in supporting Iran's nuclear program and active support for terrorism," David Cohen, the Treasury under secretary for

terrorism and financial intelligence, said in a statement.

Cohen emphasized that the United States is implementing a temporary easing of some sanctions on Iran agreed in Geneva, but "the overwhelming majority of sanctions remain in effect and will continue to be vigorously enforced."

The sanctions freeze any US assets of the targeted person or entity and prohibit transactions with any American.

Among the companies targeted was Spanish firm Advance Electrical and Industrial Technologies and DF Deutsche Forfait Aktiengesellschaft of Germany, for allegedly aiding Iran's nuclear and weapons proliferation activities.

The list includes some indi-

viduals accused of plotting attacks in Afghanistan.

Under the interim deal reached in November in Geneva, Iran agreed to freeze parts of its suspect nuclear program in return for some \$7 billion in sanctions relief as it negotiates a final, comprehensive accord to dismantle its nuclear weapons capability.

The United States also agreed to refrain from slapping new sanctions on Iran.

The US Congress, where support for Israel runs deep, has looked at ramping up sanctions on Iran despite the accord, but President Barack Obama has threatened to veto any bid to derail the ongoing diplomacy.

Dutch Schiphol airport loses out to Istanbul



THE HAGUE - Amsterdam's Schiphol airport lost its number four position in the European ranking to Istanbul in December. The fast-growing Turkish airport passed Schiphol in passenger traffic with 3.9 million passengers against 3.7 million. Schiphol did keep its fourth position over the whole of 2013 with a 3% increase in passenger traffic to 52.5 million. Istanbul showed a 13% increase to 51.1 million over the year. London Heathrow and Paris Chales de Gaulle airports retain their number one and two positions.

UK hospitals required to report female genital mutilation

LONDON (AFP) - British hospitals will be required for the first time to record patients who have been subjected to female genital mutilation, the government announced on Thursday.

The Department of Health estimates that 66,000 women in England and Wales are living with the consequences of FGM, and a further 23,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk every year.

But the most recent figures are from 2007, indicating a lack of clear information on the problem that the new centralised reporting system is intended to address.

From April, state-run National Health Service (NHS) hospitals will be required to report to the health ministry if a patient has had FGM, if there is a family history of mutilation or if an FGM-related procedure has been carried out.

The procedure, which ranges from removal of the clitoris to more widespread mutilation, can lead to infection and long-term severe pain.

It is practised across the world and in particular in Africa, but also takes place among immigrant communities in Western countries.

Female genital mutilation has been a crime in Britain since 1985, but no-one has ever been prosecuted. The Times reported that the first prosecution would finally go ahead in the coming weeks.

In a statement timed to coincide with a worldwide day for action against FGM, crime prevention minister Norman Baker said the government was determined to prosecute those who carried out such procedures in Britain.

Nepalese man dies after drinking whisky for bet

KATHMANDU (AFP) - A 47-year-old man in Nepal who downed a bottle of whisky after a bet with a friend has died from medical complications three weeks after the drinking challenge, officials said Thursday.

Pancharam Bishwokarma, owner of a gold shop in the town of Gopetar 300 kilometres (186 miles) east of Kathmandu, agreed to drain a 750 millilitre bottle of Royal Stag on January 16 if his friend paid the bill.

"Bishwokarma then left for home that afternoon. But by 8 pm, he was vomiting. He could not sleep and was rushed to a local hospital," said local police officer Sanjeev Khadka.

The doctors at the district hospital referred him to another hospital in a town in the southern plains. From there, he was again moved to a hospital in Siliguri, a town in the Indian state of West Bengal.

"He was unconscious when he was brought here," Pashupati Chaudhary, a doctor at the second hospital, B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Science in Dharan, told AFP.

"We found that he had consumed the concentrated alcohol, which was 42 percent, without any food, finishing it in five minutes. It damaged his vital organs," Chaudhary said.

Police are checking to see if the whisky, priced at 700 Nepali rupees (\$7), could have been adulterated.



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STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

Prostitution museum opens in Amsterdam's red-light zone



AMSTERDAM (AFP) - Amsterdam's red-light district opened its first "prostitution museum" on Thursday, hoping to lure tourists who always wondered what life was like for those on the other side of the infamous glass windows -- but were too afraid to ask.

"How do they live? What happens in their world?" said Melcher de Wind, a founder of the "Red Light Secrets Museum of Prostitution" which showcases one of the Dutch capital's most famous attractions. "I have always wondered what really happens behind those neighbourhood windows."

Nestled between two famous brothels overlooking a canal, the new attraction seeks to offer something different to nearby museums on the subject such as the Sex Museum or the Museum of Eroticism.

"The other museums focus on sex and sexual performance. The new museum gives you a glimpse into the world of sex workers -- what it feels like to stand behind a window and the looks you get," explained Yolanda van Doeveren, who deals with prostitution for the Amsterdam municipality.

"Maybe tourists will get a chance to change their behaviour and show a little more respect," she added.

Inside the small museum, a large television screen shows a woman performing a striptease. Visitors are then shown a film about the other side of prostitution -- women with families living everyday lives.

There are exhibits showing how both fashions and attitudes towards the world's oldest profession have changed over the centuries.

Visitors are shown a display of the tools of the trade -- condoms, lubricants and sex toys -- based on the experiences of former prostitute Ilonka Stakelborough who advised the museum.

Prostitution in the Netherlands was legalised in 2000 and there are now around 7,000 people working in the industry in Amsterdam.

Around three-quarters of the women come from low-income countries, mainly from Eastern Europe, according to Amsterdam municipality figures.

They pay 150 euros (\$202) to hire one of Amsterdam's 409 "frames", which comes with a chair in front and a bed at the back.

Many women work 11 hours a day, six days a week with a visit to a prostitute lasting around 10 minutes.

The museum depicts BDSM (bondage, domination, sado-masochism) practices, and also features a "luxury" room with mirrored ceilings, a bed lit from below, and a bathtub next to an open bottle of champagne.

Subway to remove 'dough conditioner' chemical from bread



NEW YORK - Subway confirmed on Thursday that they were removing a chemical used to make yoga mats and rubber soles on shoes from their sandwich bread. The fact that azodicarbonamide was used as an ingredient in U.S. and Canadian Subway products was brought to light by FoodBabe.com blogger Vani Hari. Hari claims the chemical can be found in 9-grain wheat, Italian white, honey oat, Italian herbs & cheese, parmesan/oregano, roasted garlic, sourdough and Monterrey cheddar breads. She launched a petition asking the sandwich chain to remove azodicarbonamide from their menu items, pointing out that Australia and Europe have banned the chemical over health concerns. Subway does not use azodicarbonamide in their bread recipes in those countries. The Center for Science in the Public Interest pointed out that azodicarbonamide has been used to strengthen dough, and forms semicarbazide and urethane when it is baked. Semicarbazide has been linked to lung and blood cancers in mice, and urethane has been known to cause cancer in rodents as well. The World Health Organization reported that case reports and studies on human have shown azodicarbonamide can cause asthma, respiratory symptoms and skin problems in workers who are exposed to it.



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Amazon unleashes 10 new TV pilots for customers to judge

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Building on its first foray into original programming, Amazon rolled out 10 new pilot shows in the United States and Britain on Thursday and invited customers to judge which ones should go into production.

The sampling includes two hour-long dramas, including one from the co-creator of the 1990s cult sci-fi series "The X-Files," plus three comedies and five shows for kids as young as six.

The pilots are free to view for Amazon Prime subscribers, who are "encouraged to watch and provide feedback ... to help determine which shows should be made into series," said Amazon in a statement.

Amazon joined the rush to online television last year with

the political comedy "Alpha House" and Silicon Valley sitcom "Betas," to be followed in the coming weeks by a triplet of children's series.

It selected those five shows on the basis of feedback from its customers -- harnessing the concept of Internet crowdsourcing to determine where it should put its production dollars.

Since launching its Amazon Studios department in November 2010, the world's leading online retailer has received more than 20,000 movie scripts and 6,000 series projects for consideration.

Netflix, its rival in the growing market for streaming films and TV off the Internet, made waves last year when it released all 13 episodes of "House of Cards" in one go in March 2013.

New York kicks off 2014 fashion week season



NEW YORK (AFP) - New York Fashion Week explodes onto a snowy Manhattan Thursday, kicking off the fall/winter 2014 season with a new look and 300 catwalk presentations before the industry shows head to Europe. The week-long fest of glamour, style and celebrity endorsement will see frenzied fashionistas high-tail it across the city, squeezing in back-to-back shows from morning until night. Dominated by big US designers led by Marc Jacobs and Alexander Wang, emerging talent from Europe, Asia and for the first time, Australia, will snip at the sidelines hoping for their big break. Despite concerns about the weather, tens of thousands of visitors are expected to descend on New York for what is the first fashion week of the year, hotly followed by London, Paris and Milan.



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New York concert defies Putin on eve of Sochi

NEW YORK (AFP) - Feted by Madonna and cheered by thousands, Russian punk protest group Pussy Riot defied President Vladimir Putin on the eve of the Sochi Olympics at a star-studded New York concert.

The performance highlighted soaring tensions between Russia and the United States, which drastically deteriorated when Moscow granted asylum to US intelligence leaker Edward Snowden last year.

US pop icon Madonna hailed the courage and fearlessness of punk heroines Maria Alyokhina, 25, and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, 24, who were released from Russian penal colonies last December.

Madonna said she was threatened with death after supporting them at a concert in Moscow during their trial in August 2012 and accused by Russian authorities of propagating homosexual behavior.

Wearing black blazers, ankle boots and white tunics with black crucifixes emblazoned on the front, Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova delivered a furious and emotional rebuke of Putin's rule.

"We will not forgive and we will not forget what the regime is doing to our fellow citizens. We demand a Russia that is free," Tolokonnikova told the crowd.

"Now Russia will be free," the pair chanted, thanking Madonna and saying they were "overjoyed" by her support.

The duo were sentenced to 21 months in jail for hooliganism after performing a stunt inside a Moscow cathedral.

Although the stunt was unpopular among ordinary Russians, their trial and sentence



Madonna (L) introduces Maria Alyokhina (C) and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova of Russian punk protest group Pussy Riot



Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips and Yoko Ono perform

turned them into dissident stars in the West.

The New York gesture was not welcomed, however, by other members of Pussy Riot - a loose feminist collective - still in Russia, and opposed to the concert tactic.

A letter signed under pseudonyms by six women presenting themselves as members said Alyokhina and Tolokonnikova should no longer be considered part of the group.

The letter complained that selling concert tickets contradicts the principles of Pussy

Riot.

Organized by Amnesty International, Wednesday's concert whipped up a crowd of thousands crammed into one of New York's largest music and sporting venues with a maximum capacity of 18,000.

Blondie, fronted by a still electric Debbie Harry, brought the house down with their hits "Call Me" and "One Way or Another".

Many US pop and rock bands also paid tribute to Pussy Riot, firing up the crowd who danced and cheered from their seats.

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CERN eyes new giant particle collider

GENEVA (AFP) - Europe's physics lab CERN said Thursday it was eyeing plans for a circular particle collider that would be seven times more powerful than the facility which discovered the famous "God particle."

In 2012, CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC) -- a giant lab housed in a 27-kilometre (17-mile) tunnel straddling the French-Swiss border -- identified what is believed to be the Higgs boson, the long-sought maker of mass theorised in the 1960s.

The facility flushed out the so-called God particle by crashing proton beams at velocities near the speed of light. It went offline a year ago for an 18-month overhaul.

The LHC, completed in 2008, has "at least 20 more years" of life in it, the agency said.

However, the long time needed to build its successor -- the LHC took a quarter of a century -- means that planning should start now.

It will launch a feasibility study next week for a so-called Future Circular Collider (FCC) with a circumference of 80 to 100 kilometres (50 to 60 miles).

The FCC would probably be located in the same area and may incorporate the LHC tunnel in its infrastructure, CERN said in a statement.

The two studies will examine the feasibility and costs and produce conceptual designs by 2018/2019, when the European-wide strategy on particle physics research is set to be updated.

Some 300 scientists will meet at the University of Geneva from February 12-15 to kick off the five-year feasibility study for the FCC.

Worst winter rainfall since 1766 in parts of Britain

LONDON (AFP) - Britain deployed Royal Marines on Thursday to help with devastating floods after what officials said was likely the worst spell of winter rainfall for 250 years.

Around 40 marines were helping reinforce flood defences near Taunton in Somerset in southwest England, parts of which have been under water for a month.

Local police said the marines would put out nearly 1,000 sandbags along a 1-2 kilometre stretch of wall near the River Tone, which has been swelled by heavy rain -- more of which was expected overnight.

Prime Minister David Cameron's government has faced criticism for its handling of a crisis that has left swathes of the country under water,

with a key railway line washed away.

Several people had to be rescued from deluged homes on Thursday. More storms are expected this weekend.

Across the English Channel, France's western tip jutting out into the Atlantic was placed on alert for flooding as high tides wreaked havoc.

Britain's Communities Secretary Eric Pickles said the government would make an extra £30 million (\$48 million, 36 million euros) available for emergency repairs, on top of £100 million announced by Cameron on Wednesday.

Pickles said the winter was the wettest since King George III was on the throne, from 1760-1820, and the flood victims had "literally been through hell and high water".



A section of rail track dangles over the sea after the wall collapsed at Dawlish

The Meteorological Office confirmed in a statement that for southern England, "regional statistics suggest that this is one of, if not the most, exceptional periods of winter rainfall in at least 248 years".

Parts of the region received five months of rainfall be-

tween December 12 and January 31.

The rainy winter has set records tumbling, being the wettest combined period of December and January across the United Kingdom since 1910, the Met Office said.

It was also the windiest December since 1969, based on the occurrence of winds over 111 kilometres per hour (69 miles per hour).

Meanwhile in France, Finistere, a department of coastal Brittany, was placed on red flooding alert and braced for two of its rivers, the Morlaix and the Laita, to burst their banks as a result of heavy rain forecast.

Use of drones spreading as cost falls: IISS think-tank

LONDON (AFP) - Drones will become an increasingly common tool of warfare and surveillance as their cost falls, a leading think-tank said Wednesday, although humans will retain ultimate control over lethal strikes. The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) also noted a continuing trend of Asian military spending surging ahead as European defence budgets shrink, in its annual assessment of the world's armies. At the launch of the Military Balance 2014 at the IISS's London headquarters, its military aerospace expert Doug Barrie said the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), or drones, would increase, although they would continue to co-exist next to manned aircraft. He said the assumption entering the 21st century had been that autonomous drones would soon completely replace piloted planes. The report said that drones were once seen almost exclusively in Western armed forces, but the proliferation of smaller systems had reduced costs, enabling greater use by private companies, individuals and countries with limited financial resources. In ongoing trends, the report noted the relative shift towards Asia in the balance of military power, with defence budgets in the region rising as Western ones tighten. The United States remained by far the world's biggest defence spender in 2013, with a budget of \$600.4 billion, the report said, followed by China (\$112.2 billion), Russia (\$68.2 billion) and Saudi Arabia (\$59.6 billion). Experts said maritime drones were lagging behind UAVs but there was now substantial investment.

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Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.94
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	198.01
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	242.77
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	27.89
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	32.77
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	29.16
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	177.29

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Dutch government earns €1.4bn from sale of ING's US mortgages

THE HAGUE - The Dutch state realised €1.4bn from the sale of ING's high-risk American mortgage portfolio - €600m more than originally estimated last autumn, Nos television says on Thursday.

In 2009, the government gave ING a €10bn capital guarantee for the mortgage portfolio. Although other state support has to be repaid by

2015, no deadline was set for the mortgage guarantee.

However, last November, finance minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem agreed the situation in the US had improved to a level where in theory the Dutch state can cancel its guarantee and ING could sell the portfolio.

The money will be used to reduce the state debt.

Wind farms will cost thousands of jobs and millions in income: councils

THE HAGUE - Local councils along the Dutch coast are warning the government that building off-shore wind farms will result in lost jobs and lower council income.

In a letter to economic affairs minister Henk Kamp and infrastructure minister Melanie Schultz van Haegen, the councils of Zandvoort, Noordwijk, Katwijk and Wassenaar say

that building wind farms off-shore but within sight of the coast will depress tourism, losing €200m each year for council coffers. In addition, 6,000 jobs will be lost.

The government is currently awaiting reports on the building of wind farms six kilometres away from the shore. It says this would be cheaper than placing them further out to sea. The coastal councils dispute this, saying the savings in construction costs would not outweigh the loss of income from having them within view.

Wall Street turns quickly on hot Internet stocks

NEW YORK (AFP) - Wall Street on Thursday toasted Yelp, but threw tomatoes at Twitter and Pandora after mixed earnings results prompted big swings in the valuations of a trio of hot Internet stocks.

The market's abrupt shifts highlighted just how quickly sentiment can change in the fast-moving sector.

Yelp is gaining in the contest for new users, while doubts are growing about growth for the other two companies. All three stocks rose in 2013, with Twitter soaring after its November initial public offering.

Yelp, an Internet consumers listings and reviews site, was the biggest winner in the market's sometimes-fickle assessment.

"There was a lot of concern with the amount of competition coming to market whether Yelp could prevail," said Rob Enderle, a Silicon valley analyst. "And these numbers suggest they will."

Yelp shares rose 18.9 per-

cent to close at \$89.46, with investors overlooking a bigger-than-expected quarterly loss of \$2.1 million.

Instead, investors focused on Yelp's 2014 outlook, which said revenues could climb more than 50 percent to as high as \$358 million as more users tap into Yelp's listings of map-based restaurants and shops.

"If you can overcome a negative perception and replace it with a positive one, you're going to get a nice bump," Enderle said.

Pandora Media continued to attract an audience, with active listeners growing 12 percent to 73.4 million in January, according to the company's latest metrics. Also, Pandora's results for the fourth quarter bested expectations -- it boosted net profit to \$23 million on revenue of \$200 million.

But investors frowned on the company's 2014 forecast, which calls for a loss in the first quarter and lackluster revenue growth.

"The listeners aren't translating into revenue," Enderle said of Pandora.

Pandora shares sank 10 percent to \$32.23.

Like Pandora, Twitter reported financial results that bested expectations. But investors pumelled the microblogging site for tepid growth of new users.

The number of worldwide users was up just nine million from the figure of 232 million when Twitter went public in November, suggesting only modest growth at a time when investors were looking for a surge. Twitter lost \$511 million in the quarter, even as revenues grew at a fast clip.

Twitter sank 24.2 percent to \$50.03, a decline that was especially notable given the broader market's rise of more than one percent.

One saving grace: Thursday's swings are a snap judgment, analysts say. Market sentiment can shift if results improve, as they did with Facebook.

Leaving the EU would boost Dutch economy, report for PVV says

THE HAGUE - Leaving the European Union would boost the Dutch economy, Geert Wilders, leader of the far-right PVV, said on Thursday, quoting a study drawn up by a UK agency.

The Capital Economics report says leaving the EU would allow the Netherlands to increase its prosperity in a way only possible in the distant past. Economic growth figures would be higher than if the Netherlands remains in the EU, the report states.

The Netherlands would no longer be tied to EU rules and requirements, allowing a freer hand to trade with other countries. Gross Domestic Product would be between 10% and 12% higher by 2035 if the Netherlands left the EU, Capital Economics said.

MPs agreed the PVV could

spend €270,000 of the money the party receives to run its parliamentary operation on the research on condition it is not used for campaigning purposes.

Wilders welcomed the report, saying it showed the best way out of the current economic crisis. The PVV is set to emerge as the biggest Dutch party in the May European elections.

"It is not just Geert Wilders saying it, but a noted bureau like Capital Economics," the party leader said.

The researchers do assume the transition from the euro to

a new currency proceeds without incident and that other EU countries continue to do business with the Netherlands, the NRC points out.

Dutch finance minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem said the PVV had commissioned a report to coincide with its standpoint.

In 2012, Wilders paid a British research group to look into the cost of bringing back the guilder. That report was drawn up by British research group Lombard Street Research, which is known for its euro-sceptic position.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

F	O	R	N	A	T	M	O	B		
A	T	O	V	I	S	O	R	O	N	
T	I	C	E	L	I	T	E	V	I	M
S	K	A	T	E	I	S	I	T		
A	D	O	C	A	N	O	E			
H	A	N	D	E	D	I	N	P	I	G
B	U	D	D	A	T	E	D	N	E	O
O	G	R	E	R	E	W	O	R	D	E
O	V	E	N	S	L	O	U			
C	L	E	O		A	L	O	S	S	
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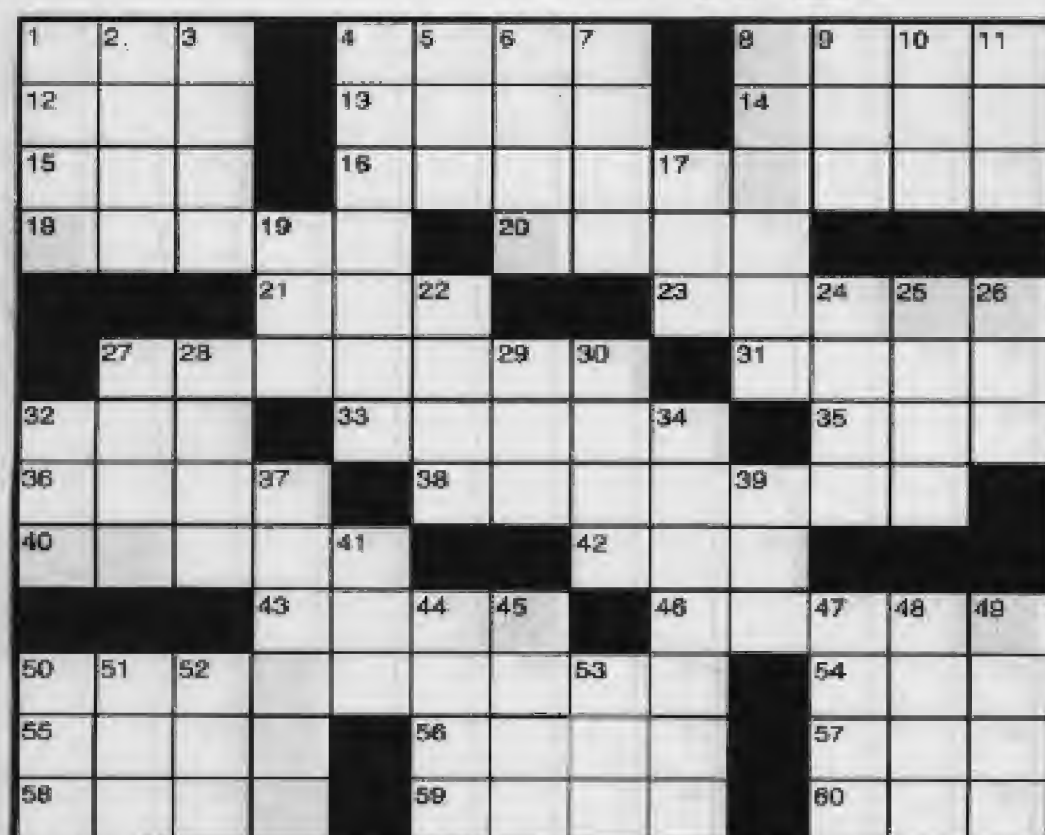
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- ACROSS**
- Col. Sanders's outfit
 - Moore of "G.I. Jane"
 - Movie lioness
 - New (prefix)
 - Level
 - Ghostly sound
 - Over, in verse
 - Timex part
 - In need of spices
 - Mets' former home
 - Heavenly body
 - Prepares a present
 - Rebels
 - Kristoferson
 - Seed vessel
- DOWN**
- Door handle
 - Believe
 - Actress Witherspoon
 - Morning moisture
 - Actress Gabor
 - NYC's NL team
 - Ruler section
 - Set sail
 - Mauna _____
 - _____ Andreas fault
 - Common joiner
 - Chop down
 - Turkey Day mo.
 - Gusted
 - Curve
- ACROSS**
- Mountaintops
 - Cable news channel (abbr.)
 - Fluent
 - Door decorations
 - Modify
 - Compass reading
 - Dames
 - The Devil
 - Pasta
 - "_____ Rita"
 - Fried cornmeal bread
 - Admonish
 - Rescue worker (abbr.)
 - Tear asunder
 - Obstacle
 - Snaky letter
- DOWN**
- Needles' partners
 - 9-digit item (abbr.)
 - Bakery item
 - Revise proofs
 - Do roadwork
 - Slant
 - Arnold Palmer's gp.
 - Talking back
 - Beseeched
 - Former airline
 - "Go, team!"
 - Ayres and Wallace
 - Musial of baseball
 - Lumber source
 - Goals
 - Have-_____ (those without)
 - When crocuses bloom (abbr.)
 - "The Raven" poet
 - Actress Sheridan
 - Refrain word

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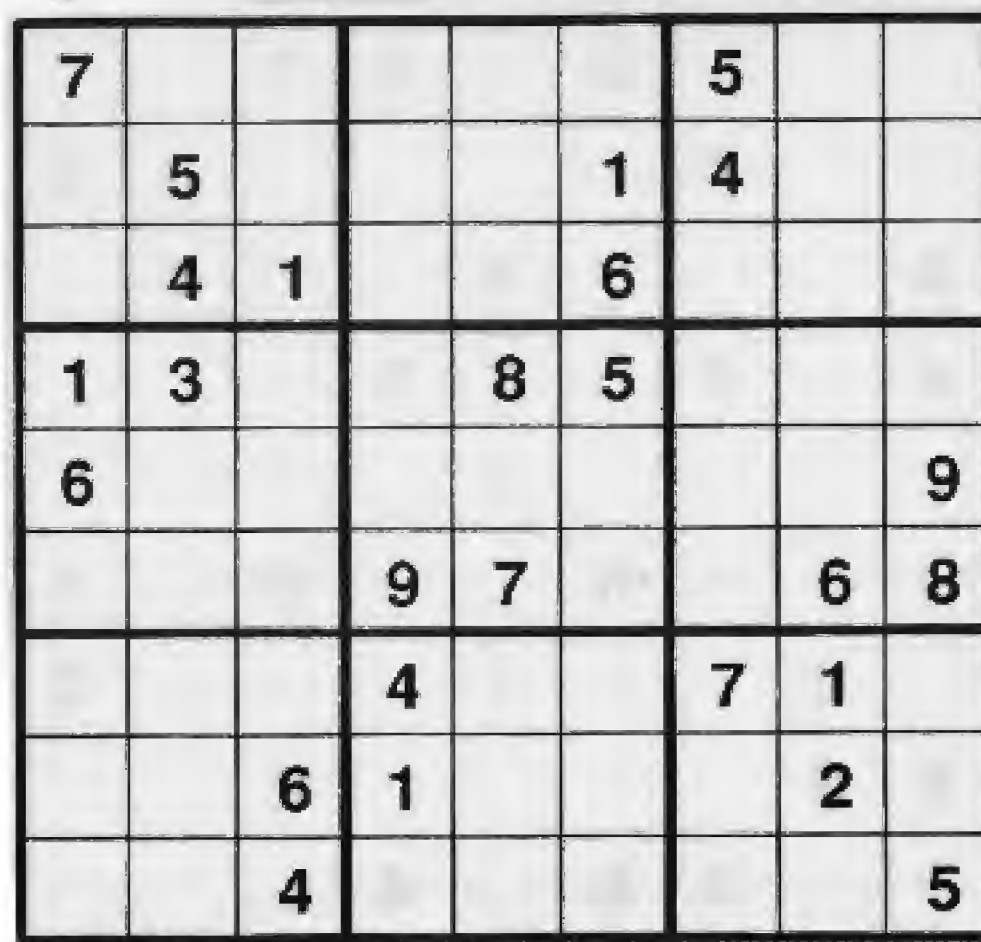
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Sudoku



Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

5 Burgers Aruba: Now your best breakfast bargain!



Delicious Breakfast

--A favorite stop for a great burger for lunch or dinner has just expanded their hours and menu to offer some of the best breakfast bargains to be found in Palm Beach. Owners Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on para-

dise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. The couple's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what they really want has resulted in a unique menu from an internationally known franchise with a "5", which now includes breakfast.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," believes Aaron. Upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

However, beginning at

8am, patrons can now order 2 eggs any style (omelets with 3 fillings are \$7.99) and toast for a price of only \$4.99 or All You Can Eat Pancakes for \$6.99! A new plate called the "Home Run" comes with 2 eggs, bacon or sausage, 2 pancakes, toast & home fries - for only \$9.99! Best of all - unlimited coffee or tea - that is, refillable and never ending is only \$.79! Breakfast is served from 8am until noon. Famous for their fries made from fresh potatoes, Aaron has been working for months on devising the most irresistible home fries recipe, chunky and tender with skins still on, after much testing and tasting, he got the thumbs up from his harshest critic, Rosie, so this is another treat you have to try.

A glance at their burger menu will certainly tempt you to return for lunch or dinner, to sample their famous specialty items such as the Gouda, Farmer's or Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice

beef), and a Western Burger with Aaron's secret-recipe crispy onion rings. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jala-peño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever, the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are



ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to

watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!"

Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

5 Burgers is now open early until 10-ish Sunday-Thursdays; and until 3am on Friday & Saturdays.

Delivery is available to most Hotels and most beaches! Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner to sit and chat, sharing their knowledge of the island while making sure patrons are happy with their meal.

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

-- Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway, we are very pleased by the response to our



concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of Gold Coast Aruba which when

complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area, also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great demand for Aruba and facili-

ties such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to

purchasing property, not the least is the future value of the investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas, 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

Visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com for more details and availability or call 586-2200 to arrange a personal tour.



Sochi in brief

SOCHI (AFP) - The Sochi Winter Olympics in brief.

Little is large show

He may be the shortest player at the Winter Olympics men's ice hockey tournament, but Dominique Heinrich of Austria believes that is an advantage.

"I can slip through people's legs," the 170 cm (five feet seven inches) tall Austrian told the Olympic News Service.

Defending champions Canada, in Austria's group, have 10 players taller than 190 cm but the 23-year-old travelling reserve forward is not afraid of heights.

"I don't think about it anymore. I have always been the smallest guy in the team since I became a professional, but it is all right, I know how to play with it," he said.

Speed skater takes fast track

Australia's Daniel Greig hopes live TV coverage of his 500m and 1000m speed skating events will make him a star in his homeland, where cricket and rugby are king.

"My races are being shown live, which is amazing," said the 22-year-old, the only speed skater from Australia in Sochi.

"Most people don't even know what speed skating is," added Greig, who won a bronze medal at the world sprint championships in Nagano in January. "When I tell them what I do, they say 'Oh Steven Bradbury'."

Bradbury won short track gold at the Salt Lake City Olympics in 2002 after all his rivals crashed.

All in the family

Austria's Olympic committee announced Thursday that double Olympic champion Benni Raich will not be the ski nation's flag-bearer at Today's opening ceremony, due to health reasons which will see him travel late to Sochi.

But the flag stays in the family: the committee nominated nordic combined skier Mario Stecher instead, a double Olympic champion in the team event, who also happens to be married to Raich's sister Carina.

Rok and rolls

Even if he doesn't win a medal, Slovenia's Rok Perman will take away a great memory from the Winter Games in Sochi.

The skier opened the men's first downhill training run in Rosa Khutor on Thursday,



Ice hockey player Dominique Heinrich of Austria



Australia's Daniel Greig Speed skater



China's world sprint champion Yu Jing

cruising down with bib number 1 and kicking off the alpine skiing events.

"I felt really honoured to open the course, a good experience," he said afterwards. "I like having number one now, it's a good memory."

China world champion skater Yu Jing out of Sochi

China's world sprint champion Yu Jing withdrew from the Winter Olympics on Thursday with a hip injury, officials said.

The 28-year-old was scheduled to compete in the women's 500m and 1000m at the Adler Arena.

China had already lost short track speed skater Wang Meng

from the Games with a broken ankle.

The loss of the 28-year-old Wang was a bitter blow for China, as she took three of the national team's five gold medals at the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver.



Sochi Briefs:



Russia's Maxim Trankov and Russia's Tatiana Volosozhar perform the Figure Skating Pairs Team Short Program at the Iceberg Skating Palace during the Sochi Winter Olympics on Friday.



China's Ning Qin competes in the Women's Freestyle Skiing Moguls qualifications at the Rosa Khutor Extreme Park during the Sochi Winter Olympics yesterday.




US Karly Shorr competes in the Women's Snowboard Slopestyle qualification at the Rosa Khutor Extreme Park during the Sochi Winter Olympics on Friday.



Canada's Arianne Jones practices during a women's Luge training session second run at the Sanki Sliding Centre in Rosa Khutor yesterday on the eve of the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games' opening ceremony.

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Exciting synchronize swimming competition on Betico Day

ORANJESTAD - Last Saturday the synchronized club...The Barracudas...organized their competition in conjunction with the Betico Day celebrations. In the weekend of January 25th, the Barracuda were in Curacao to compete in the synchronized swimming organized by Curacao. This is why they reprogrammed the event for last Saturday.

They received an enthusiastic public for this event. They were judged by the synchronized swimming judges, who just recently graduated to a higher level from the coaches course by FINA. They were able to place more emphasis on different techniques for the swimmers. The final results were, in Category 12 and under, there was Victoria



Geurts, Kainah Croes, and Meghan Tromp. In Category 13 to 15 years, Abigail de Veer, Talisah Beke, and Rizhaylee Bello, and in Category 16 - 18 years, Alexandra Mendosa,

and Neftally Albertsz. The Subsidy Commission of the Lotto pa Deporte congratulates all these who triumphed

in this synchronized swimming competition.

Congrats, gals...keep up the good work!

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Baseball: Cubans see crisis after tournament strike out

HAVANA (AFP) - Like a batter beamed by a wild pitch, baseball-mad Cubans are trying to shake off the trauma of seeing their team eliminated in their historic return to a Caribbean tournament. In official newspapers, social media and the street, Cubans voiced discontent at what some billed as a baseball crisis in a nation passionate about the sport, whose fan base includes former president Fidel Castro. There were high hopes in Cuba's grand return to the Caribbean Series, with domestic league champions Villa Clara representing the country and promising to compete for the trophy. But Cuba struck out in its grand return to the tournament hosted by Venezuela, losing three out of four games. Cuba dominated the Caribbean Series before withdrawing 54 years ago, when Castro outlawed professional sports. It won seven of the first 12 tournaments between 1949 and 1960. Despite the end of professionalism, Cuba remained a giant in the sport, winning 25 international trophies as well as three Olympic gold medals and second place in the 2006 World Baseball Classic. But it has failed to lift any international trophy in the past eight years. The final tally was three big defeats against Mexico (9-4), Venezuela (8-5) and the Dominican Republic (9-2), and a close 2-1 victory against Puerto Rico -- scoring just 13 runs while allowing 27.



Bradley seeks redemption in Pacquiao rematch



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Timothy Bradley knows that in the minds of many there's a blemish on his ostensibly perfect 31-0 ring record. He's aiming to set that right against Manny Pacquiao in April. "This fight is to clean up the uncertainty, clean up the controversy, to redeem what I didn't get after the first fight -- which is the credit for beating Manny Pacquiao," Bradley said Tuesday as the build-up to the April 12 bout in Las Vegas began. There was no war of words as the two met the press in a glittering Beverly Hills Hotel ballroom, just mutual respect and a determination voiced by both fighters to set the record straight. Bradley snatched Pacquiao's welterweight belt on June 9, 2012 via a split decision, with two judges scoring it 115-113 for the American and a third scoring it 115-113 for Pacquiao. With the win, unheralded Bradley snapped Pacquiao's 15-fight, seven-year winning streak, but the decision sparked outrage in the boxing-crazy Philippines and in the United States, where two senators pushed for the creation of a national boxing commission to regulate the sport. The World Boxing Organization later said the special panel it asked to review the bout said the decision should have gone to Pacquiao, but Bradley kept the WBO welterweight world title that he has since defended twice.

Olympics: Jamaica bobsleigh in 'stop cash'

ROSA KHUTOR (AFP) - Jamaica's Olympic bobsleigh team on Thursday pleaded with their adoring fans to stop sending money to fund their Sochi fairy tale while also dreaming of converting Usain Bolt from sprint to snow. Pilot Winston Watts admitted that the Internet campaign to fund their trip had been such a success that he and brakeman Marvin Dixon feared they would be damned as greedy opportunists if they didn't call a halt. "The donations were just coming on and on. We had to stop them. We've called a press conference to do it," said Watts after almost \$80,000 poured into the empty Jamaica coffers with \$178,000 gathered in total from sponsors and the national federation. Watts and Dixon finally got on the bobsleigh track Thursday after being reunited with their lost luggage that had kept them idle since their arrival. The 46-year-old Watts said he was delighted to extend his Olympic career into a fourth Games. Other bobsleigh teams in Sochi said the presence of the Jamaicans could only be good for the sport. "I know those guys, they did work hard and it's not easy to qualify for the Games. I mean they tried in 2006 and they missed, they tried in 2010 and they missed. They tried again and they made it and it is good (for the sport) to have that exposure," said US competitor Steven Holcomb.





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Olympics: Fast, furious snowboard hands Sochi first big test

ROSA KHUTOR (AFP) - It's fast, furious and threatens to present the Sochi Winter Olympics with its first major headache as the hunt for snowboarding gold gets underway at the Rosa Khutor Extreme Park.

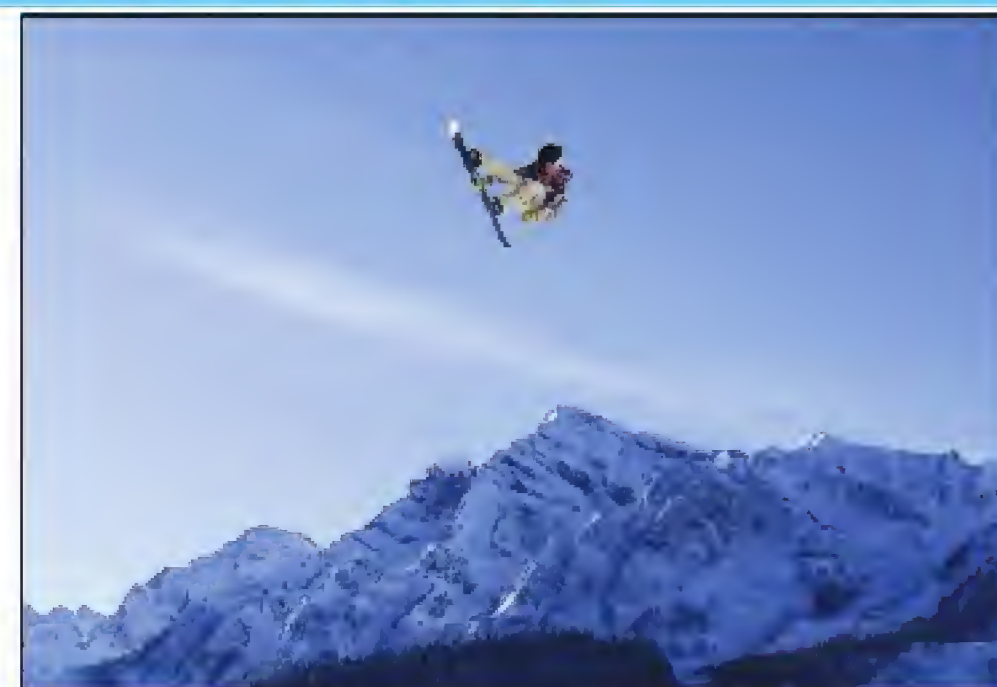
More than 240 athletes from 31 nations are to launch themselves down the the troubled track beginning yesterday, but that number has already been reduced by one after Norway's gold medal favourite in slopestyle, Torstein Horgmo, crashed out in training and suffered a broken collarbone.

Fellow athletes complained that aspects of the course were too dangerous, held an emergency meeting and forced officials into a rapid tweak of the most challenging aspects of the run.

Even American double Olympic champion Shaun White admitted that the daunting slopestyle course where competitors tackle various forms of obstacles -- rails, quarterpipes, and jumps -- was intimidating.

But White, the 27-year-old X Games pioneer, who has undergone a succession of knee and ankle injuries, insisted that the spectacular sport was full of dangers.

"It's intimidating. You know any time you show up to a course you have to learn the speed, the distance from the jumps and what the rails are like. It's been a challenge," said



White. "Maybe this course might have a little bit more than others, but we're trying to figure it out. We're trying to get through the course, be safe and have a great Olympics."

White, the halfpipe champion in Turin in 2006 and Vancouver in 2010, is looking for a record third gold in the discipline as well as hoping to capture the inaugural slopestyle title.

Snowboard got underway on Thursday, a day before the official opening of the Games with men and women competing in the qualifying rounds of slopestyle, one of two events added to snowboarding at Sochi.

In slopestyle, the athletes navigate their way through a series of rails and other features at the top of the course before moving on to three progressively bigger jumps.

Masters of the "triple cork" -- three off-axis flips combined with three or four full spins -- are the likes of White, along with Canadian trio, Mark McCormis, Maxence Parrot and Sebastien Toutant as well as Stale Sandbech of Norway.

The leading women will be performing double flips with medal favourites including Norway's Silje Norendal, Jamie Anderson of the United States and Dutchwoman Cheryl Maas.

The halfpipe will see White bidding for a third successive gold but where he faces stiff competition from 15-year-old Japanese sensation Ayumu Hirano.

On the women's side, reigning champion Torah Bright, who is also competing in slopestyle and snowboard cross, faces American duo Kelly Clark and Arielle Gold.